

164 W. 45th St.,  
New York, Oct. 28,  
1883.

My Dear May,

I am very grateful  
for the note received a day or  
two since from you, but truly  
sorry you had to leave your  
bed in order to write it. Years  
ago I used to have attacks  
of catarrh myself, and I  
know what a depressing  
influence it exerts, and how  
hard it is to be dislodged  
when once it gains a foot-  
hold. I hope you will recover  
from the attack before winter  
sets in.

I think I have gained a



little in health since I wrote  
you last, but <sup>my chief</sup> ailment hangs  
over me continually, like the  
sword of Hamoches, ready to  
fall. If I were sure of being  
as well as I am now for  
the next six months, I should  
be strongly tempted to try my  
hand at a new book, to meet  
a pressing want. Of all those  
who have occasion, in cur-  
rent literature or in conversa-  
tion to refer to the anti-slavery  
movement, how few are able  
to do so intelligently either in  
respect to ~~the~~ chronology or  
to the persons engaged. How  
many are unable to open a month



without putting a foot in it. Even  
men of intelligence in other things  
are unable to give any connected  
account of the matter. It is too  
early for an impartial history;  
but it seems to me that an  
"Exposition" might be made of  
the origin of the moral move-  
ment, of what was done in the  
early years, of the point at which  
it swept off into party politics,  
of the chief personages en-  
gaged in that department of  
the cause, and of the various  
steps that led up to the war;  
of the <sup>continued</sup> activity of the moral work-  
ers, and their measures; of the re-  
lations between the two schools,  
their points of unity and diverg-



ence; how each in its way ad-  
vanced the cause, and how  
all were finally melted into one  
in the final result. This all to be  
done as impartially as possible  
and with all possible brevity  
and the <sup>leading</sup> actors assigned to their  
real places in the picture,  
both in respect of time and  
otherwise. Do you catch my  
idea from these imperfect hints.  
It seems to me not impossible  
to make a book, the usefulness  
which would be generally recog-  
nized, and which would be  
genuinely non-partizan. I speak  
confidentially for the present, and  
beg you to tell me what you think  
of the idea. Yours, faithfully,  
Oliver Johnson.